Before I turn to my last resort,
I need to find out how much this kid knows.
Now, then.
My sitting on a sofa.
...And lipstick on a cup?
Let's see...
Is that all? Are those the only "unnatural" things you noticed the other day?

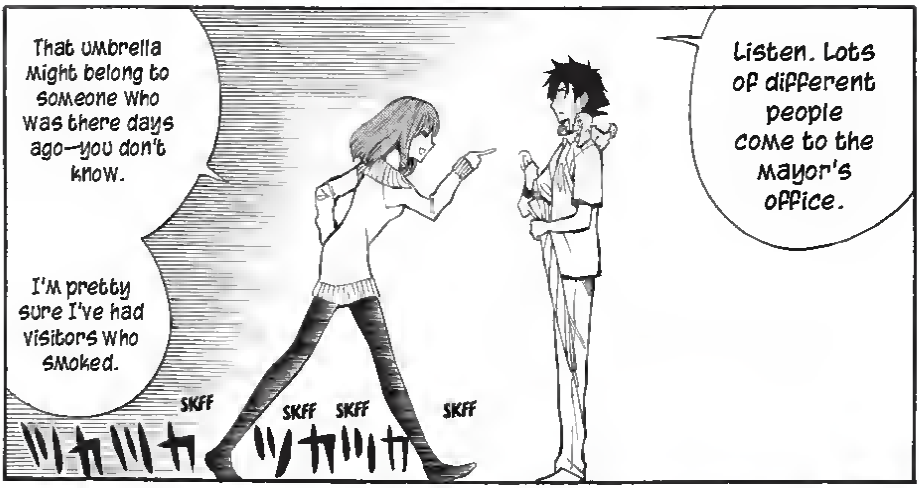
Case 7: ⚜ Hidden from the Press, Part 6

Take the smell of tobacco, for instance.
!!
GRRR...
NOD
No, of course not. There's more.
Especially because city hall is a smoke-free building.
When there's a smell inside a room, then someone coming from the outside is more likely to notice it.
SNIFF SNIFF
When we visited your office, I smelled cigarette smoke.
I didn't see it in the sink strainer.
I threw it away.
But there was no cigarette butt in the ashtray.
You said...
But, well...

Do you always throw recently extinguished cigarette butts in the trash can?
Well, you didn't look in the trash can.
Don't you think that's dangerous? There could still be embers left.
I ran it under some water before I threw it away.
It was full of plastic bags.
Not to mention the trash can itself.
...Why would you go to all that trouble?
GRIT
SHUT UP!!
Wouldn't you just have your secretary bring in a fresh ashtray?
Just like when you ordered coffee for us.

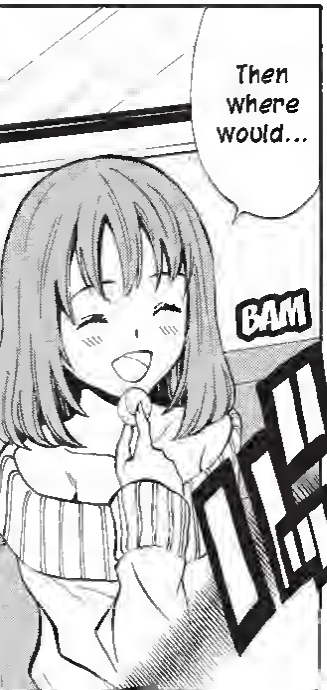
Mayor Takasugi...
Do you know why I brought this vinyl umbrella...
...when it's not even raining?
No.
I...I don't know. Maybe the forecast predicted rain?
D-DMP...
ドカン...
That's...
ピク
TWITCH
This fell on my head as soon as I opened the umbrella.
Cigarette ash.
ぱさっ
FWOFF
SWITCH SWITCH
ガサッ
RUSTLE
This is why.

GISH...
And I took it home with me by mistake. That's what I think.
This umbrella isn't mine.
It belonged to someone who visited your office before I did.
Of course I don't smoke, and no one else in my family does, either.
I bought it at the corner store right before the interview.
So there's no way it could have gotten ash in it.
Even if this were my umbrella,
...What are you trying to say?
So that's what you were getting at.
HEE HEE...
Because unless you walk and smoke at the same time, you'd never get a pile of ash inside your umbrella.
Whoever it really belonged to must be someone who smoked frequently.

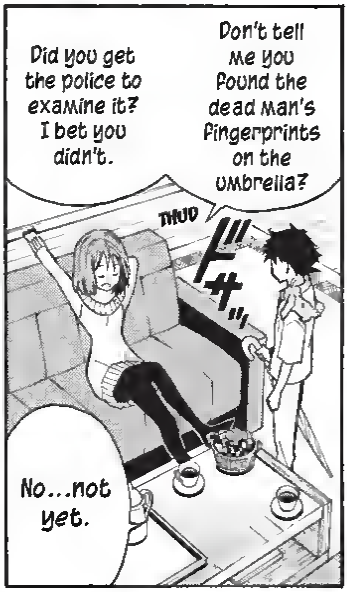

That umbrella might belong to someone who was there days ago—you don't know.
I'm pretty sure I've had visitors who smoked.
SKFF
SKFF
SKFF
SKFF
Listen. Lots of different people come to the mayor's office.

What?!!
None of them had the same fingerprints as Ichirō Yakita, did they?
But...

When I took the umbrella
I made sure to wipe it from top to bottom.
Don't you try to bluff me.
...What is that supposed to mean?
There are any number of ways to talk my way out of that.
And if there are prints on it? They're mine!


Then where would...
BAM

You won't find his prints. He never came to my office.
I'll find them.
I doubt he'd be wearing gloves outside at this time of year.


Did you get the police to examine it? I bet you didn't.
Don't tell me you found the dead man's fingerprints on the umbrella?
THUD
No...not yet.

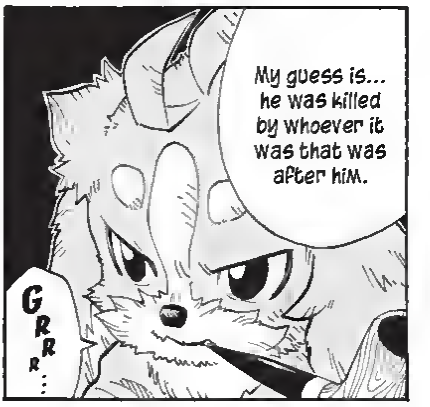
But every time you open or close an umbrella, you touch it right here.
It's surprising how much you don't think about it when the umbrella is closed.
...
DROP...
Here.

AH HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
OH, COME ON!
This umbrella was still wet when we got to your office. You would have had to wipe the prints off...
...after that, without us noticing. And then you could only have wiped the outside.
HEE
You caught me!
HEE
HEE
...
GULP...
IF I could have resolved the matter with money...I would have.
...It's true. I told Yakita-san to come to my office.
I'd never do that. ...Now, take a seat.
So you admit you killed him?

...
The truth is, someone was after him.
He promised me that if I gave him five million yen to help him flee the country, I would never see him again.

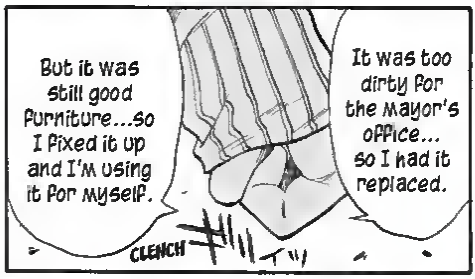
I had no choice but to hide it.
But even a little incident like that can be fatal to a mayor.
You see? We talked it out, and it was settled, just like that.

...Do you think you've talked your way out of this?
?!
Even if what you say is true...


My guess is... he was killed by whoever it was that was after him.
GRRR...

And you still had the air conditioning high enough to need a blanket, even though it wasn't hot out.
You still had us sit in armchairs while you sat on the sofa.
No, it wasn't.
The game is on, Sherdog.
B-DMP...
Now that I'M in your apartment,
I told you it was just a coinci-dence!
You haven't explained any of that.
CLATTER
B-DMP...
I know exactly why you did those things.

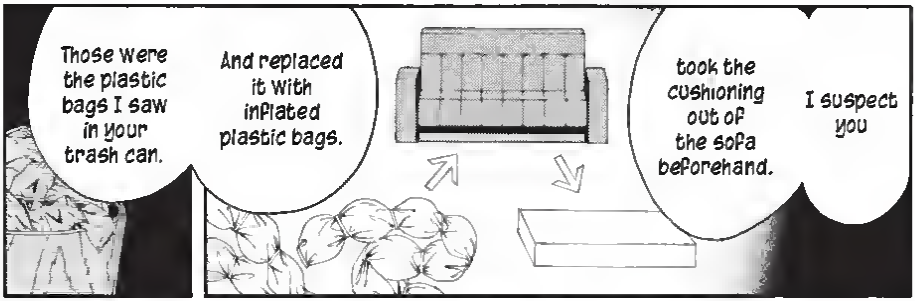
This set of furniture
is the same furniture that was in your office that day.


It was too dirty for the Mayor's office... so I had it replaced.
But it was still good furniture...so I fixed it up and I'm using it for myself.
CLENCH

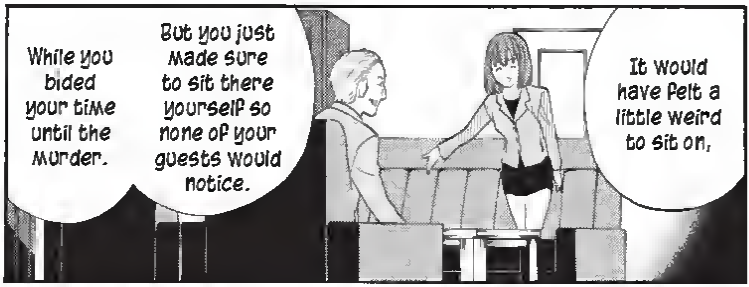
I remember it all, even how it felt to sit in this chair.
...
What is it doing here?

The Mayor's furniture... in your private home?
I paid for the new furniture!
Consider it a donation to the city! There's nothing wrong with me taking the old furniture for myself after that.

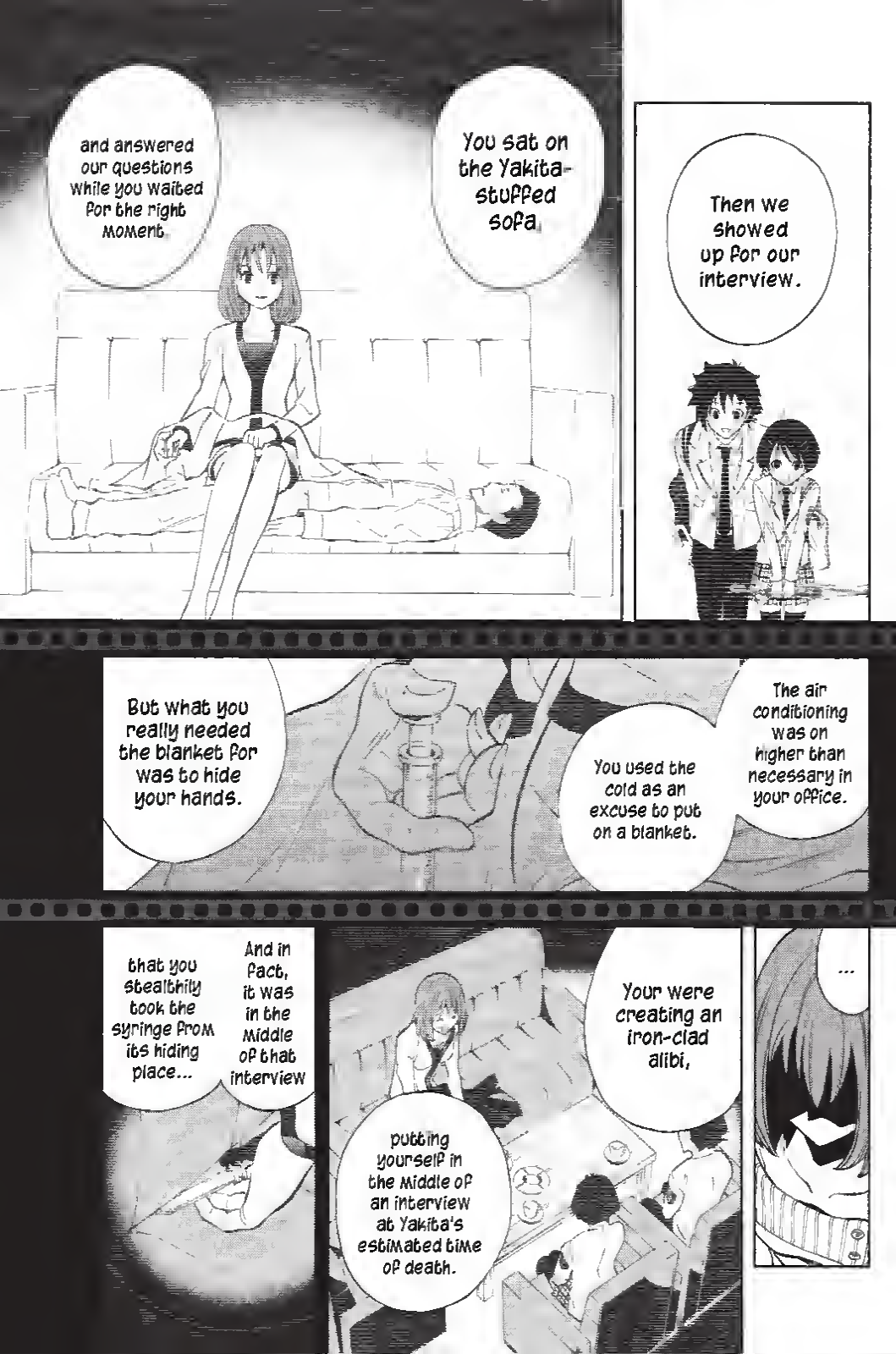
You're lying!
It was all to set the stage for your magic alibi!


Those were the plastic bags I saw in your trash can.
And replaced it with inflated plastic bags.
took the cushioning out of the sofa beforehand.
I suspect you

...

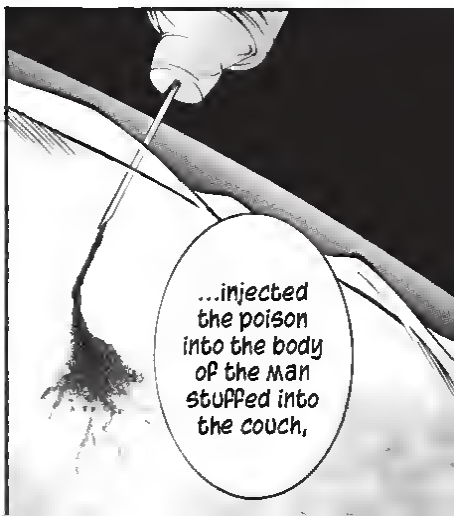

While you bided your time until the murder.
But you just made sure to sit there yourself so none of your guests would notice.
It would have felt a little weird to sit on,

Then, on that rainy day,
Yakita disguised himself as an electrician— as per your instructions—
You played it cool, and slipped a sleeping drug into his coffee.
That's how you knocked him out.
Then you unzipped the sofa, took out the plastic bags,
and stuffed Yakita inside—he's a small man, after all.
...
And made sure no one saw his face when he went through reception.
Of course, at this point, Yakita was only sleeping.
He wasn't dead.

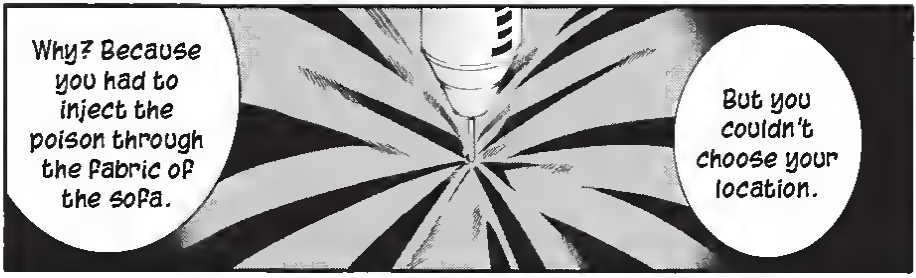

and answered our questions while you waited for the right moment.
You sat on the Yakita-stuffed sofa.
Then we showed up for our interview.
But what you really needed the blanket for was to hide your hands.
You used the cold as an excuse to put on a blanket.
The air conditioning was on higher than necessary in your office.
that you stealthily took the syringe from its hiding place...
And in fact, it was in the middle of that interview
putting yourself in the middle of an interview at Yakita's estimated time of death.
Your were creating an iron-clad alibi,
...

PTS

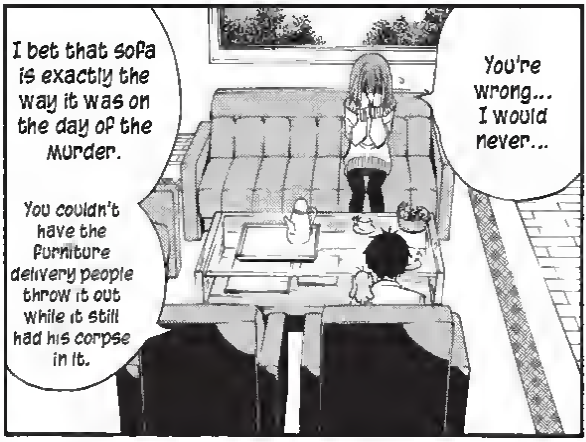
and killed him.
...


...injected the poison into the body of the man stuffed into the couch,

I heard that Yakita was stabbed somewhere in the shin.
Normally, you would inject poison into the arm or the neck.
Even if you did go for the leg, you would go for the thigh.


But you couldn't choose your location.
Why? Because you had to inject the poison through the fabric of the sofa.

You brought it back to your home, so you could wait for a better opportunity to get rid of the body, didn't you?
Even with the cushioning back inside, you just couldn't let me sit there.
SWAY...


You're wrong... I would never...
I bet that sofa is exactly the way it was on the day of the murder.
You couldn't have the furniture delivery people throw it out while it still had his corpse in it.

Do you have any proof?

...
If you really are innocent,
Then call my sister and someone from the crime lab right now, and let them examine the sofa!

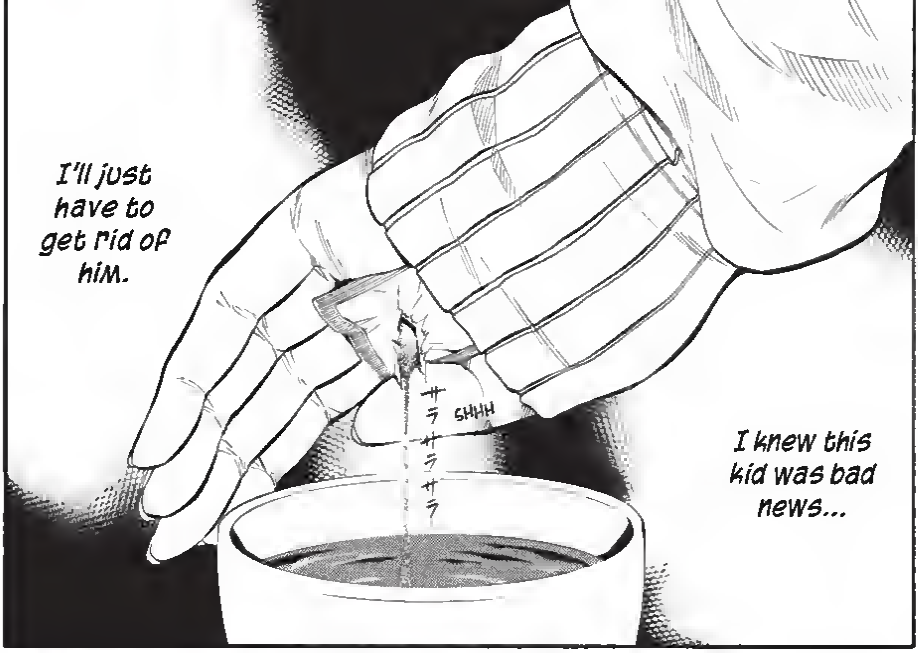
CLATTER
!
Y...yes, I think so!
You probably took a vacuum to it after you tossed the body...but—
WHAP

There's sure to be a strand of hair, some sweat... Maybe a piece of skin that peeled off him!
PLOP
If the police investigate it thoroughly enough...

I just have to text my sister about the prints on the umbrella,
And send her the conversation I just recorded.

Sigh...

...
And she'll come running!


I'll just have to get rid of him.
SHHH
I knew this kid was bad news...

It's important to keep your medicine around.
It's true what they say—it pays to be prepared.

You brought this on yourself, by picking a fight with a murderer♡
Don't hold this against me.